**Media Release**

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**Citizens Project releases polling data showing strong support of Colorado Springs' proposed buy-in health plan**

Citizens Project hired polling firm Ridder/Braden to conduct a poll to survey voters' opinions on the issues of same-sex domestic partner benefits (overturned by council in April), employment nondiscrimination policies, and the proposed buy-in health plan. The poll, completed in early December 2003, reached 300 registered voters that voted in the April municipal elections. In addition, 100 surveys were conducted with voters in council districts 1 and 3 that remembered voting in favor of Councilman Hente and Heimlicher, respectively. A majority of those polled were Republicans, the majority identifying themselves as conservative.

Poll results showed 71% of respondents favoring the proposed buy-in health plan that city council will vote on in February. The poll also indicated that the issue of revoking the same-sex domestic partner benefits was a factor in the last municipal election. However, this issue was not the most important on voters' minds. Also, poll results show strong support for employment nondiscrimination policies to protect city workers.

"The poll reinforces the sense that Colorado Springs' voters are fair-minded." remarks Greg Borom, executive director of Citizens Project. "Voters understand the value of creating a competitive benefits package for city-employees and want to ensure that discrimination in the workplace is a thing of the past."

Citizens Project urges council to adopt the buy-in health plan. When council voted against health benefits for same-sex domestic partners in April, many council members cited two main concerns: economic impact to the city and that the policy was not inclusive of all families. The buy-in plan addresses those concerns. The economic impact is minimal and a wide range of employees — heterosexual and homosexual, single or married — can use the benefit. City council has worked hard to find a compromise and create a fair-minded plan.

"Citizens Project reiterates the message of the poll results: we support fair-minded policies for city-employees," states Borom. "We trust that council will embrace this spirit of fair-mindedness rather than promoting the narrow agenda of a vocal minority on this issue."

Citizens Project is a local nonprofit that promotes the traditional values of our nation: equality, individual freedom, separation of church and state, civic engagement, and respect for diversity.

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